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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - INAUGURATION OF NEW  
RUSSIAN PRESIDENT, JAPAN-CHINA SUMMIT, AND CYCLONE  
RESPONSE BY BURMESE JUNTA

¶1. LEAD STORIES: All Thursday morning papers gave prominent front-page coverage to Wednesday's summit between Chinese President Hu and Prime Minister Fukuda, during which the two appeared to reach a basic accord on joint development of natural gas fields in the East China Sea.

¶2. "Russia Embarks on New Journey Loaded with Heavy Tasks" The liberal Mainichi's Moscow correspondent wrote (5/8): "In his inauguration address on Wednesday, Russian President Medvedev called public attention to his liberal line by playing up his advocacy of civil liberties and rights. However, few predict any major change to the 'two-headed' power-sharing arrangement between Medvedev and Prime Minister-designate Putin. The Medvedev administration will have to deal with such challenges as surging prices and government corruption."

¶3. "Can Russia Win Back International Trust?" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri editorialized (5/8): "Russia is unabashed in its attempts to bring the former Soviet republics of Georgia and Ukraine back into its sphere of influence. Is this appropriate behavior from a major power? The response to this issue will demonstrate the policies and character of the new administration. President Medvedev is a lawyer who has claimed that he will restore the rule of law in Russia. Russia has no future unless it seriously addresses the issue of corruption. Concurrently, Russia cannot be treated as a genuine superpower if it does not respect international law."

¶4. "Agony of Nominal Head of State" A Moscow-based reporter for the conservative Sankei commented (5/8):

"Despite the grandiose inauguration of President Medvedev, Prime Minister-designate Putin is expected to effectively lead the new administration. While he is officially the head of state, Medvedev is a token president without real power. The prevailing view is that this 'two-headed' setup is just a temporary power-sharing arrangement."

5."Momentum Created for 'Mutually-Beneficial Strategic Partnership,' But Issues Remain" The business-oriented Nikkei argued in an editorial (5/8): "With regard to Tibet, what concerns the international community most is the issue of human rights. However, judging from the remarks made at their press availability, it appears that Chinese President Hu and PM Fukuda did not have in-depth discussions on the matter.... The international community also has a critical view of China on such issues as Darfur and Burma. In order to clear the dark clouds hanging over the Beijing Olympics, President Hu should exercise leadership to resolve these problems."

6."Burma Must Open Its Doors to Humanitarian Assistance" The liberal Asahi editorialized (5/8): "Despite the junta's announcement that Burma will accept aid donations from the international community, delays in the issuance of visas have prevented NGO and UN representatives from entering the devastated areas. This is likely because the junta does not want others to see the reality of the devastation and the delays in relief activities. We are forced to make this conclusion, because the junta has prioritized

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maintaining its grip on power over the lives and human rights of its people.... Is a referendum (on a constitutional draft) possible, given the lack of relief activities? What is most important for the junta at this moment is to do its utmost to rescue victims and open up its borders to humanitarian assistance. The Burmese people should not be allowed to suffer more."

DONOVAN